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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 31 May 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

At a time when the international community is fully and responsibly focused on promoting an environment conducive to the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and seeks serious and coordinated action to salvage the prospects for realizing the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, Israel, the occupying Power, in word and in deed is demonstrating its deliberate intent to ensure the failure of these efforts as it continues to recklessly defy the rule of law and the position and will of the international community and to choose continued occupation and conflict over peace. Israel's illegal actions and intransigence continue to deny and obstruct peace, freedom, justice and security for the Palestinian people and continue to inflame tensions on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to stoke sensitivities throughout the region and beyond.

Before recalling the most recent violations of international law by the occupying Power, we wish to stress the position of the Palestinian leadership in welcoming some of the positions publicly declared by United States President Barack Obama in the major policy statement he delivered regarding the Middle East, on 19 May 2011, including his affirmation of the two-State solution based on the 1967 borders, and that negotiations should begin with the issues of borders and security. The Palestinian leadership welcomes his position that all final status issues, particularly the crucial issues of Jerusalem and the Palestine refugees, will also be on the agenda of negotiations, as they are issues of central importance to the Palestinian people and were determined to be core final status issues at the outset of the peace process and throughout for the past two decades.

Further, in connection with President Obama's speech, the Palestinian leadership has underscored the necessity for the Security Council and the Quartet to establish an effective mechanism and specific timetable, not to exceed September 2011, in order to implement the parameters set out by President Obama and all other political

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terms of reference that are based on international legitimacy in order to launch a serious political process towards the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement.

While many world leaders welcomed the articulation by President Obama of this important position, in particular his affirmation that the borders of an independent, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine and Israel should be based on 1967 lines, it is highly regrettable that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu responded with his usual tone of blatant defiance and arrogance, making provocative and irresponsible statements amounting to the destruction of the two-State solution and the prospects for it to serve as the foundation for a future of peace, justice and security between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. The provocative statements made in his speech before the joint session of the United States Congress on Tuesday, 24 May 2011, have only further raised tension, further exposed the Israeli Government's true ill intentions and further called into question its credibility as a peace partner. Indeed, the Prime Minister's statements throughout this recent period offered not a single concrete possibility for restarting a genuine peace process. Moreover, the facts on the ground and the illegal Israeli policies, particularly Israel's insidious and unlawful settlement colonization campaign that has continued in tandem with the verbal provocations and incitement, are totally poisoning the atmosphere and undermining the efforts to resume peace negotiations.

Over the past 14 days, the Israeli Government has approved thousands of new illegal settlement units in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. On 19 May 2011, the occupying Power announced its intentions to build up to 1,500 settlement units in the so-called settlements of Har Homa and Pisgat Zeev in Occupied East Jerusalem. This was followed on Wednesday, 26 May 2011, a day after the Prime Minister's provocative statement that "Jerusalem will never be divided", by a ceremony to mark the completion of the second phase of another 60 settlement units in Ras al-Amud, in the heart of a highly populated and bustling Arab neighbourhood at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Occupied East Jerusalem. This most recent scheme is part and parcel of the occupying Power's attempt, along with its ring of other illegal settlements in the Palestinian neighbourhoods such as Silwan, Issawiya, Al-Tur and Sheikh Jarrah, to illegally, deliberately and artificially sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian Territory and destroy that Territory's contiguity and viability.

At the same time, the occupying Power has continued to pursue home demolitions and evictions of Palestinian families, particularly in Occupied East Jerusalem. We express our appreciation in this regard to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mrs. Valerie Amos, who recently called on Israel to end its forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

We reiterate that East Jerusalem is an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, it remains occupied, and that, in the context of the two-State solution for peace, on which there is a clear international consensus based on international law, United Nations resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map, it is to be the capital of the State of Palestine. We also reiterate that all Israeli settlements are illegal under international law and as such must neither be permitted to prejudge the outcome of final status negotiations nor should they enjoy any legitimacy from the international community. It must be made clear to Israel, once and for all, that

the creation of so-called facts on the ground will never make legal or legitimate what is illegal under international law and what is considered a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Israel also continues its repressive, brutal campaign of violence, intimidation and harassment of the Palestinian people under its nearly 44-year military occupation. The illegal settlers, who continue to rampage throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory with impunity, are a central part of this force of repression. In the current period, the occupying forces have allowed more settler violence and destruction to be perpetrated and have continued to use excessive force and violence against peaceful Palestinian protesters, particularly those protesting the settlements and the Wall, and to carry out military raids and arrest campaigns on a daily basis. This has included the arrest of a 74-year-old woman in the village of Arura, north of Ramallah, after occupying forces raided her home.

The incitement spewed this week by Prime Minister Netanyahu, along with Israel's escalating settlement campaign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and all other provocations as mentioned above require the serious attention of the international community. The continuation of this situation will only cause further deterioration of conditions on the ground, exacerbate heightened tensions, and destroy all international and regional efforts to revive the peace process in any form. We thus call on the international community, the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, to assume its full responsibilities and to act urgently, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, to put an end to these illegal Israeli policies and intentional provocations, in order to salvage the hopes that may still exist to advance peace and security for all the people in the region.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 392 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 16 May 2011 (A/ES-10/519-S/2011/308), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations